

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/812,466

Examiner

Matthew B. Smithers

Applicant(s)

COLLAMORE ET AL.

Art Unit

2137

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to an amendment filed September 13, 2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-4,7-11,14-18 and 21; renumbered as 1-15.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.


Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____


Matthew B. Smithers
Primary Examiner
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DETAILED ACTION

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. William Francos on November 14, 2006.

The application has been amended as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Original) The image management system of claim 1, further comprising:

a network configured to couple the image acquisition device to the computer; and

a network interface associated with the image acquisition device and the computer, the network interface configured to electronically transfer the diagnostic image over the network.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for applying an electronic signature to a report associated with an image file, the method comprising the steps of:

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acquiring an ultrasonic diagnostic image from an ultrasound diagnostic device;

forwarding the diagnostic image to a computer;

storing a plurality of electronic signature files in a memory associated with a computer;

associating one of the plurality of electronic signature files with the diagnostic image; and

requiring a password prior to associating one of the plurality of electronic signature files with the diagnostic image.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7, wherein each of the plurality of electronic signature files corresponds to a signature of a user of the computer.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, further comprising the step of using a client application to instruct the computer to associate one of the plurality of electronic signature files with the diagnostic image.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of presenting to a user of the image management system a plurality of choices from which the user identifies him or herself as the user of the image management system so that the electronic signature file associated with the diagnostic image corresponds to the user of the image management system.

12 –13 (Cancelled).

14. (Original) The method of claim 8, further comprising the steps of:

coupling the image acquisition device to the computer system over a network; and

electronically transferring the diagnostic image over the network.

15. (Currently Amended) In an image management system, a computer readable medium having a program for applying an electronic signature to a report associated with an image file, the program comprising logic for performing the steps of:

receiving an ultrasonic diagnostic image from an ultrasonic image acquisition device;

forwarding the diagnostic image to a computer system;

storing a plurality of electronic signature files in a memory associated with a computer;

associating one of the plurality of electronic signature files with the diagnostic image; and

requiring a password prior to associating one of the plurality of electronic signature files with the diagnostic image.

16. (Currently Amended) The program of claim 15, wherein each of the plurality of electronic signature files corresponds to a signature of a user of the image management system.

17. (Currently Amended) The program of claim 16, further comprising logic for allowing a client application to instruct the computer to associate one of the plurality of electronic signature files with the diagnostic image.

18. (Currently Amended) The program of claim 17, further comprising logic for presenting to a user of the image management system a plurality of choices from which the user identifies him or herself as the user of the image management system so that the electronic signature file associated with the diagnostic image corresponds to the user of the Image management system.

19-20 (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) The program of claim 15, further comprising logic for:

coupling the image acquisition device to the computer system over a network; and

electronically transferring the diagnostic image over the network.

Allowable Subject Matter

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The present invention is directed to a method and apparatus for applying electronic signatures to an image file. Each independent claim identifies the uniquely distinct features of "associating one of the plurality of electronic signature files with the diagnostic image; and requiring a password prior to associating one of the plurality of electronic signature files with the diagnostic image". The closest prior art, Pasieka (US 6,587,945), discloses a conventional system for applying electronic signature to a diagnostic image fails to anticipate or render the above underlined limitations obvious.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."


Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Matthew B. Smithers whose telephone number is (571) 272-3876. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (8:00-4:30) EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Emmanuel L. Moise can be reached on (571) 272-3865. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Matthew B Smithers
Primary Examiner
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